

Sec. 8. - Meetings of council.

At 5 o'clock p.m., on the first Monday in January, following a regular municipal election, the council shall meet at the usual place for holding meetings. If the first Monday in January is a legal holiday, then the meeting shall be held on the following day. Thereafter the council shall meet at such times as may be prescribed by ordinance or resolution; provided that at least fifty regular meetings shall be held in each year. The mayor, the president of the council, or any three members thereof may call special or emergency meetings of the council as provided for by ~~general laws of the state~~ ordinance of council. All meetings of the council or committees thereof shall be ~~held in public in accordance with the general laws of Ohio pertaining to the requirements for open meetings of public~~ meetings as provided for by ordinance of council ~~bodies~~ and the minutes and records thereof shall be maintained as an electronic record that is made available to the public pursuant to the general laws of the state governing public records.

Sec. 240. - Open meetings.

The public bodies of the city shall hold all meetings in public as provided for by ordinance of council ~~accordance with the general laws of the state pertaining to open meetings~~. In addition to those entities defined as public bodies in the general laws of the state, an entity of the city shall be considered a public body for purposes of this section if its members are appointed to serve as a member of the public body by an officer of the city, and the entity has been established and its members appointed for the sole purpose of advising any officer or decision-making body of the city.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ORDINANCE, IF CHARTER PROVISION PASSES

Chapter 119 – PUBLIC MEETINGS

119.01 - Definitions

(A) As used in this chapter:

(1) "Electronically" means by way of electronic equipment or devices, including but not limited to, live-streaming by means of internet, local radio, television, cable public access channels; call in information for a teleconference; or by means of any other similar electronic technology.

(2) "Open to the public" means that a public meeting, or hearing conducted in-person, virtually, or any combination thereof, to which the public has access to the deliberations and official actions of the public body in-person, virtually, electronically, or any combination thereof.

(3) "Public body" has the same meaning as defined in RC Sec. 121.22 and Sec. 240 of the City Charter.

(4) "Virtually" means by way of teleconference, video conference, or any other similar electronic technology.

119.03 – Open Meetings

(A) The public bodies of the city shall hold all meetings in accordance with the general laws of the state pertaining to open meetings unless otherwise provided for in this chapter or by ordinance of council.

(B) All meetings of any public body are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times. Each public body shall determine the method by which its meetings or hearings are open to the public. For public hearings conducted virtually, the public body must also establish a means, through the use of electronic equipment that is widely available to the general public, to communicate with witnesses and to receive documentary testimony and physical evidence.

119.05 – Attendance at Open Meetings

(A) A member of a public body shall be in attendance at a meeting open to the public to be considered present or to vote at the meeting and for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present at the meeting. Public bodies may establish rules or bylaws permitting its members to attend public meetings or hearings of the public body in-person, virtually, or a combination of the two.

(B) The following shall apply if any or all of the members are permitted to attend virtually:

(1) Each member attending virtually shall be considered present as if the member is in-person at the public meeting or hearing, shall be permitted to vote, and shall be counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present at the public meeting or hearing;

(2) Any vote on a resolution, ordinance, motion, or formal action of any kind cast by a member attending virtually shall have the same effect as if the member were attending the public meeting or hearing in-person; and

(3) The public body shall ensure that members of the public can observe and hear the discussions and deliberations of all the members of the public body, whether members are attending in-person or virtually.

(C) The members of a public body may hold an executive session but only after a majority of a quorum of the public body determines, by a roll call vote, to hold an executive session and only at a regular or special meeting for the sole purpose of the consideration of any matter provided for in RC Sec. 121.22. Public bodies may establish rules or bylaws permitting its members to attend an executive session of the public body in-person, virtually, or a combination of the two as provided for in division (B).

119.07 – Notice to the Public

(A) Each public body shall provide at least twelve (12) hours' prior notification of the time, place, agenda items, and the manner by which the meeting or hearing will be held.

(B) Notification may be made

119.09 – Meeting Minutes

(A) The minutes of a regular or special meeting of any public body shall be promptly prepared, filed, and maintained and shall be open to public inspection. The minutes need only reflect the general subject matter of discussions in executive sessions.

(B) Where a full audio or video with audio of the meeting has been recorded and preserved as a public record, written meeting minutes are not required.